

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4005

UNCLAS JAKARTA 5314

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, ID

SUBJECT: POST RELATIONSHIP WITH AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

REF: STATE 094266

1. EMBASSY JAKARTA HAS CLOSE, EFFECTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN INDONESIA (AMCHAM). AMCHAM IS OUTGROWTH OF AMERICAN BUSINESS GROUP (ABG) ESTABLISHED WITHIN AMERICAN MEN'S ASSOCIATION, NOW DISBANDED, AN ORGANIZATION FOSTERED BY EMBASSY IN LATE 60S AND EARLY 70S. DUE GENERALIZED GOI ANTIPATHY TOWARD ORGANIZED FOREIGN BUSINESS GROUPS IN LATE 60S, CREATION OF EFFECTIVE AMCHAM FOLLOWED TORTUROUS ROAD.

2. IN 1973 ABG BEGAN USING NAME, AMCHAM, AND CAREFULLY MOVED TOWARDS MORE FORMAL STRUCTURE. AMBASSADOR AND THE THEN COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR WORKED CLOSELY WITH GROUP TO ASSURE BURGEONING AMCHAM'S ORIENTATION DID NOT BECOME ONE WHICH WAS CONSIDERED INIMICAL TO GOI AND USG INTERESTS.

3. SINCE THAT TIME CLOSE COLLABORATION HAS CONTINUED. AMBASSADOR IS HONORARY PRESIDENT OF AMCHAM, AND ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR AND LABOR ATTACHE SERVE ON AMCHAM BOARD. LABOR ATTACHE IS CHAIRMAN AMCHAM COMMITTEE ON LABOR RELATIONS, AND E/CM COUNSELOR IS MEMBER OF INVESTMENT COMMITTEE. AMCHAM HAS PROVIDED SUBSTANTIAL SUMS IN SUPPORT OF POST'S COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER NAMED "JAKARTA BUSINESS BULLETIN" WHICH HAS A DISTRIBUTION OF OVER 1200 TO INDONESIAN AGENTS OF FOREIGN FIRMS, GOI AGENCIES AND ALL KNOWN U.S. FIRMS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN INDONESIA. IT IS MUTUAL PLAN TO SHIFT BASIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLISHING COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER

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FROM EMBASSY TO AMCHAM. IN THIS RESPECT AMCHAM CURRENTLY

PUBLISHES ITS OWN AMCHAM "BULLETIN" WHOSE DISTRIBUTION IS LIMITED TO AMCHAM MEMBERS. EMBASSY MATERIAL ON TRADE PROMOTION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S., AND APPROPRIATE MATERIAL FROM USIS WIRELESS FILE IS PROVIDED TO AMCHAM AND UTILIZED WITHOUT QUESTION.

4. AMBASSADOR MEETS EVERY SIX WEEKS WITH SOME 15-20 AMCHAM MEMBERS TO REVIEW SUBJECTS SELECTED BY BOTH AMBASSADOR AND AMCHAM. EMBASSY ALSO UTILIZES AMCHAM AS VENUE FOR HIGH LEVEL VISITORS TO SPEAK. FOR EXAMPLE U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE BUTZ HAD OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK BEFORE 135 AMCHAM MEMBERS AND GUESTS AT SPECIAL LUNCHEON MEETING ON PARIL 19. VISITING CONGRESSMEN HAVE MET WITH ENTIRE AMCHAM MEMBERSHIP OR SELECTED MEMBERS AT BREAKFASTS AND INFORMAL SOCIAL GATHERINGS.

5. AMCHAM INDONESIA HAS CURRENTLY SOME 62 CORPORATE MEMBERS AND OVER 100 ADDITIONAL ASSOCIATE, INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL MEMBERS. ITS FORMAL STATUS VIS-A-VIS GOI HAS NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED, BUT AN APPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIP IS BEING WORKED ON. DESPITE THIS LACK OF FORMAL STATUS MEETINGS BETWEEN AMCHAM LEADERSHIP AND SEVERAL GOI AGENCIES HAVE TAKEN PLACE TO REVIEW SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS. GROUPS OF GERMAN, BRITISH, AUSTRALIAN AND JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED AND DO HAVE A FORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOI'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (KADIN), THIS RELATIONSHIP HAS NOT PROVED SATISFACTORY AND BRITISH GROUP IS CONSEQUENTLY CONSIDERING DISBANDING. AMCHAM IS EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE FORMALIZATION CHANNELS.

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